

COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

# COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW



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# REVUE CANADIENNE D'URBANISME

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE D'URBANISME



# COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW

# REVUE CANADIENNE D'URBANISME

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COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE D'URBANISME

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#### TWO VILLAGES ON THE RICHELIEU

The ancient riverside road opens out at the heart of St. Hilaire before the church. On the opposite bank, the same feature is to be found in Beloeil. Even the waterside railing is held back so that each side can share the best aspect of the other. See article on p. 105. *Photo: Watson Balharras*

#### DEUX VILLAGES SUR LE RICHELIEU

Le chemin du roi s'ouvre en un point de vue au coeur de St. Hilaire, devant l'église. De l'autre coté la même vue s'offre de Beloeil. La cloture est laissée ouverte pour que chaque côte puisse jouir de l'autre. Voir commentaire page 105.

*M. Harold Clark, ex-président de l'ACU, a adressé la parole lors du sixième congrès général annuel, à l'Université Queen's, le 12 septembre 1952. M. Clark a fait la revue de l'activité de l'Association et brossé un tableau de ce que réserve l'avenir. Les extraits de son discours que nous présentons ici ont trait aux aspects complémentaires de l'accroissement urbain (aspects qu'étudie aussi l'Association) et aux mises au point à apporter à l'administration municipale en vue d'une telle mise en oeuvre. (Le texte français de ces extraits paraît à la page 99.)*

## GOALS FOR CANADIAN COMMUNITY BUILDING

by W. Harold Clark\*

It is our stated goal, and the Prime Minister has also declared it as a goal for Canada, that every family should have a decent home—irrespective of its social and economic circumstances. The record of our actions will indicate that from 1946 to 1949 our efforts were chiefly directed toward convincing the national government that it alone had the power and the means to direct the necessary resources toward an all-embracing, well conceived attack on the unsatisfactory housing situation in this country. In other words, we realized that far reaching economic and political decisions had to be made.

Immediately upon the presentation of the Federal Housing Bill in September of 1949 we adopted a program of action at our Winnipeg Conference. We first of all commended the Government of Canada for introducing legislation broad enough in scope to affect directly Canadian families in all economic and social circumstances. We urged upon them, however, that federal aid should require local survey and analysis of varying housing needs and that after a specified date such aid should only be available to housing projects which fitted into an overall community planning framework.

Federal legislation, in order to be effective, required that Provincial governments should share both legislatively and financially in the scheme, and further that the resources made available should be administered wisely. We therefore urged Provincial governments to assume their proper share of responsibility, and to delegate the greatest possible measure of authority for survey, planning and administration to the Municipal governments.

To both Federal and Provincial governments we pointed out that the creation of stable and satisfactory communities required many types of housing suitable to different sized family units as well as different income groups; and that they also required amenities such as

parks, schools, shopping centres, community halls and so forth. It was and still is our conviction that properly integrated community development requires properly integrated governmental planning and the sharing of financial responsibility, not overlooking the facilities around which the housing will be grouped and without which a housing project cannot meet the common needs of the newly housed families. . .

Despite the broader view that the Federal government now takes of its responsibility for housing, and the parallel legislation permitting eight of our Provincial governments to share in the cost, the probabilities are that housing completions in 1952 will fall far short of those completed last year. It is also evident that our housing provisions have not relieved the pressures on many groups in the community—the low income group, the old age group, those with large families.

There are of course many reasons why our housing program is falling short of what this Association has urged on many occasions; but I shall mention only one: and that is the lack of serviced land upon which to build the houses. Most larger urban centres are spilling over into adjoining municipalities and these dormitory areas, for the most part lacking industrial development, are finding themselves threatened with serious financial difficulties. Different solutions have been attempted by different suburban municipalities—to encourage balanced growth, to discourage further housing development, to raise taxes sharply, to force subdividers to contribute to the cost of schools some part of the proceeds from the sale of land. The larger cities have little or no available land; and in any event the mounting cost of expanding services to newer areas presents grave financial problems which are reflected in ever increasing tax rates. Meanwhile, the fringe municipalities have available land but because of unbalanced growth in many cases, cannot afford to use it. Perhaps any discussion of housing now leads inevitably to a consideration of desirable forms for the growth of cities.

\* Extracts from address of President to Sixth Annual Meeting of Community Planning Association of Canada, held at Queen's University, Kingston, on Friday, September 12th, 1952.

## DESIRABLE PATTERNS OF URBAN GROWTH

The theme of the presentation, made by members of our Council to the Federation of Mayors last July, was that the major cities of Canada, and indeed major cities all over the world, have grown beyond the point where they are efficient in terms of industry and commerce, and also beyond the point where they provide happy and satisfactory living for those who must spend their lives in, or in close proximity to, these larger metropolitan areas...

In 1898 Ebenezer Howard suggested, as an alternative to the continued growth of already large metropolitan areas, the creation of Garden Cities which would be built around the metropolitan area as satellite towns; these towns would be separated from the central city and also separated from each other by agricultural areas (or green belts) and connected together by an orderly system of road and rail development. He hoped that these satellite towns or Garden Cities, by combining the city life with rural surroundings, would provide the best of each—would eliminate the disadvantages of city living on the one hand and of rural isolation on the other. The agricultural land separating the satellites and the main city could provide vegetable, dairy and meat products for all of the centres of population; the belt could also serve as a recreational belt that would be in close proximity to each of the component parts of what we might term the trading area.

If it is desirable to control the size of cities and to direct industrial expansion to smaller centres, what is holding us back? There are many things of course, not the least of which is civic pride; but perhaps the greatest deterrent is the lack of adequate administrative machinery and financial arrangements with which to pour new urban substance into this regional mould.

## MEANS FOR ACHIEVING DESIRABLE PATTERNS

Some problems will have to be faced in the larger regional areas if we should adopt as a policy the deliberate direction of new development away from our larger centres.

At the present time, no municipality has any effective jurisdiction beyond its own borders, nor can it unreasonably and indefinitely refuse permission to build *within* its own boundaries if land is available and the building and the use to which it will be put do not contravene existing by-laws. While it is true that powers for inter-municipal planning are provided in all the provincial planning acts, the implementation of plans made jointly by more than one municipality rests with the individual municipalities. Joint planning boards are mainly intended, however, for municipalities which impinge upon each other and where many people who work in one municipality live in an adjoining one.

While it is desirable to integrate the planning of

fringe areas with that of the central city, the very existence of such areas under separate municipal jurisdiction is one of the greatest handicaps to sound metropolitan planning.

The kind of planned dispersal and deliberate direction of new development about which we spoke in Calgary, and which the Mayors approved by resolution, is not the kind of metropolitan over-spilling to which we have become accustomed. What we are suggesting is the building up of smaller centres and the creation of new ones, separated from the central city and each other by agricultural and recreational land. These sub-centres would be self-contained insofar as their daily social, shopping and business life is concerned; the daughter communities should also be self supporting insofar as the proper balance between industrial and housing development can bring about municipal solvency in the face of present municipal obligations.

If such an economically sound and socially desirable development is to be fostered, it will require not only a reorientation in our thinking but legislative changes of a somewhat far reaching nature. While it is essential for municipalities to retain local autonomy over a wide range of matters, it may be necessary, no less than we are finding it necessary in international affairs, to surrender some local authority in the interests of the region as a whole. As a corollary, it seems necessary for provincial governments to delineate regional planning areas large enough to constitute natural trading units, and to make provision for a new form of regional administration which would have planning responsibilities for the whole area of its jurisdiction, and would progressively take over from the municipalities within its orbit those functions that are essential to the rounded development of the area defined.

In suggesting a satellite plan of development, we are not overlooking the important fact that most small centres must be prepared to receive new developments at a greatly accelerated rate. This will require a complete overhauling of their administrative departments, more frequent meetings of their Councils, plans prepared further in advance, a long term civic works program with capital budget and so on. They will require both administrative and financial assistance; but the task should not prove impossible if they can look forward to planned and orderly growth rather than the haphazard and often somewhat overwhelming development to which many have recently been subjected...

The smaller centres in the general trading area, which are somewhat distant from the larger centres of population and which will receive an increasingly large volume of new development, will want to safeguard and preserve those qualities which are characteristic of smaller centres, and which make them interesting and desirable places in which to live and work; otherwise one of the greatest advantages of the deliberate dispersal of industrial devel-

opment would be lost. We must guard against simply multiplying in many centres the social and economic disadvantages of the existing metropolitan area. . .

In discussing Administrative Means of Achieving Desirable Patterns, I should like to raise a question as to the desirability of continuing to delegate primary responsibility for drafting plans to advisory planning boards. . .

A comprehensive plan emanating from a Citizens' Advisory Board or Commission often fails to make adequate use of the knowledge and judgment of civic officials, whose experience in dealing with city extension in the past should be most valuable. Such a plan often does not coincide with the daily recommendations emanating from civic Department heads which must be considered by the municipal Council. Too often, a comprehensive plan having its origin in an independent commission is used by elected representatives as good election material. A candidate for office may be for the plan, or he may be against it, but often he does not have enough knowledge of the plan itself or the reasons underlying certain recommendations to form a sound judgment. I believe, therefore, that the time has come when city planning should be the direct responsibility of the Municipal Council rather than the responsibility of an Independent Board. A citizen Planning Board may have an important function but its object should be more as a board of review than as an initiating body. This change in planning responsibility, it seems to me, can be brought about by two steps; and while there are many valid arguments for each step, I shall refrain from going into details and shall present the two possibilities as simply as I can.

The first step is for the municipal Council to create a Planning Committee from among its members. The advantages of having responsibility vested in a committee of Council is that the members of such a committee would come to have greater knowledge of the problems of city growth and development, and would be in a much better position than an independent commission to guide and direct their fellow councillors. Also, if they were responsible for the creation of a plan they would be bound to uphold the plan in council deliberations and on the public platform—and there would be less likelihood of an Official Plan becoming an official football. The life of the City Council in many municipalities however, is only one year and a one year term does not allow sufficient time for proper consideration of planning

matters. This in itself, in my opinion, is sufficient justification for a longer term of office for elected municipal representatives.

The other step is to constitute a panel of heads of Civic Departments, preferably under the chairmanship of the Planning Officer, and to charge that Committee with the responsibility for unanimous recommendation regarding the technical outlines of future development. These outlines could then be presented directly to the Council for adoption, or to a planning Committee of Council, which in turn would report to the entire Council. In this latter case, there would of course be a combination of the two methods suggested.

One of the great advantages it seems to me of shifting the responsibility for drafting plans from an Advisory Board to a Municipal Staff Panel, is that such a Panel would be likely, in making recommendations, to be more realistic in that staff recommendations would have to be within the financial means and legal competence of the municipality to implement. . .

Planning should be related to capital budgeting and if the head of the Civic Treasury Department is a member of the Planning Committee, he would undoubtedly insist that the cost of works planned for any period be kept within the ability of the municipality to raise money; he would undoubtedly be in a position to advise how much borrowing can be undertaken each year in order to carry out the program of proposals. The two changes that I have suggested do not eliminate entirely a useful role for a Citizen Advisory Planning Board. The job would be one of review after plans had been submitted to the City Council for consideration, but of course before final adoption.

The success of the planning which must now be done will have a vital bearing upon the kind of surroundings in which the majority of Canadians must continue to live. A great deal more has to be done in studying the problems, and in searching for and testing alternative patterns of development. The Community Planning Association of Canada is committed to promoting that search. It is our hope that an increasing number of other organizations, and individuals too, will give thought and expression to these perplexing matters. The creation of pleasant and efficient urban communities that will provide full scope for industrial development and human happiness is one of the great challenges of the second half of Canada's century.

# BUTS A ATTEINDRE DANS L'URBANISATION DU CANADA

par W. Harold Clark\*

NOTRE but clairement énoncé n'est-il pas que chaque famille doit posséder un foyer convenable, quelle que soit sa condition sociale et économique? Tel est, d'ailleurs, le but qu'a proposé le premier ministre pour tout le pays. Ce que nous avons accompli de 1946 à 1949 indique bien que nous nous sommes efforcés de convaincre le gouvernement central que lui seul possédait le pouvoir et les moyens financiers lui permettant de faire servir les ressources nécessaires à améliorer de façon complète et intelligente la situation peu satisfaisante du logement au pays. En d'autres termes, nous avions constaté qu'il faillait adopter des mesures économiques et politiques de longue portée.

Dès la présentation du projet de loi fédéral sur l'habitation, en septembre 1949, nous avons adopté un programme d'action à notre congrès de Winnipeg. Tout d'abord, nous avons félicité le Gouvernement du Canada d'avoir présenté une mesure d'une portée telle qu'elle visait directement les familles du pays à tous les paliers économiques et sociaux. Nous avons réclamé, cependant, que l'aide fédérale soit accordée moyennant des relevés locaux et l'examen des besoins en matière de logement et que, après une certaine date, cette aide ne soit fournie qu'à l'égard des entreprises de logement conçues en fonction d'un plan directeur.

Pour être efficace, la loi fédérale exigeait que les gouvernements provinciaux participent au programme financièrement et par l'adoption d'une loi, et qu'en outre, les ressources devenues disponibles soient utilisées sage-ment. Nous avons donc fortement invité les provinces à accepter la part de responsabilité qui leur revenait et à accorder aux municipalités le plus d'autorité possible à l'égard des relevés, des plans d'aménagement et de l'ad-ministration.

Nous avons fait observer aux gouvernements fédéral et provinciaux que l'aménagement de villes agréables et destinées à durer nécessitait la construction de plusieurs genres de maisons convenant à des familles diverses dont le revenu varie. Nous avons aussi fait observer qu'il fallait songer à certains services, par exemple, les parcs, les magasins, les salles publiques, et le reste. Nous étions convaincus, nous le sommes encore, que l'expansion bien conçue d'une ville requiert un programme administratif également bien conçu, de même que le partage des responsabilités financières, sans omettre les services à

mettre à la disposition du nouveau quartier d'habitation, services devant répondre aux besoins ordinaires des familles nouvellement logées.

Bien que le gouvernement fédéral admette une plus grande responsabilité en matière de logement et que huit provinces aient adopté des mesures permissives en vue de partager le coût des maisons, il semble que beaucoup moins de logements seront terminés en 1952 que l'an dernier. Il est également évident que les mesures adoptées en matière de logement n'ont été d'aucun secours à plusieurs groupes de la collectivité, les familles à faible revenu, les familles nombreuses ou les vieillards.

Evidemment, pour bien des raisons, notre programme de logement n'atteint pas le but qu'a préconisé notre Association. Je me contente d'en mentionner une: le manque de lotissements munis des services municipaux. La plupart des centres urbains plus importants se déversent dans les localités avoisinantes qui, pour la plupart, n'ont pris aucune expansion industrielle et se trouvent sous le coup de graves embarras financiers. Diverses municipalités de banlieues ont recouru à toutes sortes de solutions: encourager une croissance équilibrée, décourager la construction de maisons, augmenter fortement les impôts. Les villes plus importantes n'ont plus ou presque plus de terrains disponibles. De toute façon, le coût plus élevé que comporte l'extension des services à de nouvelles régions présente des problèmes financiers graves qui se traduisent par une augmentation incessante du tarif d'imposition. Et pourtant, les municipalités de banlieues ont des terrains disponibles; mais, par suite d'une croissance non équilibrée, elles ne peuvent s'en servir. L'étude de la question du logement nous amènerait peut-être inévitablement à examiner la façon dont les villes devraient grandir.

## COMMENT LA VILLE DOIT-ELLE GRANDIR?

A la réunion de la Fédération des maires, en juillet dernier, les membres de notre conseil ont développé le point que voici: les grandes villes du Canada, à la vérité, les grandes villes de tous les pays, ont atteint de telles proportions qu'elles ne répondent plus aux besoins de l'industrie et du commerce, qu'elles ne permettent plus de vivre de façon agréable et heureuse à ceux qui doivent habiter ces vastes régions métropolitaines ou leur voisinage immédiat.

En 1898, Ebenezer Howard avait proposé, comme remède, les cités-jardins qui avoisineraient la métropole, mais en seraient séparées (et séparées entre elles) par une région agricole. Elles seraient toutefois reliées entre elles

\* Extraits du discours du président à la sixième assemblée annuelle de l'Association Canadienne d'Urbanisme, tenue à l'Université Queen's, de Kingston, le vendredi 12 septembre 1952.

The same article appears in English on p. 96.

par un bon réseau de routes et de voies ferrées. Ces cités-jardins, croyait-il, posséderaient les avantages de la ville et de la campagne, sans comporter le désavantage de vivre en taudis ou d'être isolé à la campagne. La région agricole fournirait tous les produits nécessaires à la cité et servirait aussi de lieu de divertissement à ses habitants.

S'il faut empêcher nos villes de trop grandir et encourager l'expansion industrielle des villes moins importantes, qu'est-ce qui nous en empêche? Il y a évidemment la fierté civique, mais le plus grand obstacle est sans doute l'absence de rouages administratifs convenables et de dispositions financières qui permettent de concevoir sous de nouveaux angles l'expansion urbaine dans les régions de banlieue.

#### COMMENT REUSSIR ADMINISTRATIVEMENT?

Si nous tenons à orienter une nouvelle expansion urbaine en dehors des grands centres, il faudra résoudre certains problèmes dans les régions plus vastes.

Dans le moment, aucune municipalité n'a vraiment compétence en dehors de ses limites et aucune ne peut indéfiniment refuser la permission de construire *dans* son territoire, du moment que le terrain est disponible et que la bâtie et l'usage auquel elle est destinée ne sont pas en contravention des règlements en vigueur. Bien que toutes les lois provinciales d'urbanisme prévoient des pouvoirs à l'égard de l'urbanisme inter-municipal, la mise en application des programmes dressés conjointement par plusieurs municipalités dépend de chacune d'entre elles. Les commissions conjointes d'urbanisme visent surtout, cependant, à régler les problèmes des municipalités qui empiètent les unes sur les autres et où beaucoup de gens qui travaillent dans une ville demeurent dans la ville voisine.

Il est souhaitable de tracer les plans pour les banlieues, comme parties du plan de la cité centrale. Mais il sera mieux encore de terminer l'existence de plusieurs municipalités distinctes dans chaque région métropolitaine parce que cela constitue l'une des plus grandes difficultés à vaincre pour arriver à un urbanisme métropolitain.

La répartition équilibrée des industries et une sage direction en matière d'expansion nouvelle, deux questions que nous avons traitées à Calgary et que les maires ont approuvées par une résolution, s'écartent beaucoup du laisser-aller que nous connaissons en matière d'urbanisme. Nous proposons l'aménagement de petites localités et la création de nouvelles, séparées de la ville centrale et entre elles par des terrains en culture et des terrains de jeux. Ces petits centres seront autonomes en ce qui a trait à leur vie sociale quotidienne, quant au commerce et aux affaires; elles devront aussi se suffire à elles-mêmes dans la mesure où l'expansion des industries et des maisons d'habitation peut amener, vu les obligations municipales actuelles, la solvabilité municipale.

Il faudra, si nous voulons préconiser une telle expansion, saine du point de vue économique et souhaitable

du point de vue social, non seulement modifier nos concepts, mais aussi recourir à de nouvelles mesures législatives d'une portée quelque peu plus lointaine. Les municipalités doivent nécessairement conserver leur autonomie sous bien des rapports; elles devront, cependant, tout comme cela se passe dans le domaine international, abandonner une certaine part de leur autorité pour le bien général de l'ensemble de la région. En conséquence, les gouvernements provinciaux devront, semble-t-il, donner aux régions urbaines des limites suffisamment vastes pour qu'elles constituent des unités de commerce en elles-mêmes. Et les gouvernements devront prendre des dispositions en vue d'assurer une nouvelle forme d'administration régionale, qui assumera toutes les obligations en matière d'urbanisme dans la région qui relève de son autorité et, peu à peu, libérera les municipalités dans son orbite des fonctions à remplir pour assurer l'expansion de toute la région.

Un tel plan visant la création de localités satellites ne nous fait pas oublier un facteur très important: la plupart de ces petits centres devront être disposés à se développer très rapidement. Ils devront réorganiser entièrement leurs services administratifs; leurs conseils devront se réunir plus souvent, préparer leurs plans bien plus à l'avance, établir des programmes de travaux municipaux à longue portée, dresser un budget, et ainsi de suite. Ils auront besoin d'aide, tant du point de vue administratif que du point de vue financier; mais cette tâche n'est pas impossible, si ces petits centres savent envisager une expansion ordonnée et exécutée selon un programme, plutôt que de s'en tenir au laisser-aller observé dans le cas d'un trop grand nombre de ces localités depuis quelque temps, au point qu'elles sont souvent écrasées sous le fardeau qui leur est imposé.

Les localités moins populeuses qui se trouvent dans l'orbite commercial, tout en étant un peu éloigné des grands centres, et qui prendront une expansion de plus en plus marquée, tiendront à sauvegarder les caractères particuliers qui en font des endroits où il est agréable de demeurer et travailler. Si elles n'y réussissaient pas, l'un des principaux avantages de la répartition des industries s'en trouverait annulé. Prenons garde de simplement multiplier dans plusieurs endroits les désavantages économiques et sociaux dont souffrent actuellement les régions métropolitaines.

L'examen de ce second point: Comment réussir du point de vue administratif? nous amène à nous demander s'il est souhaitable de continuer à confier aux commissions consultatives d'urbanisme la responsabilité première à l'égard des programmes à tracer.

Un plan général conçu par ces commissions consultatives ne tient souvent aucun compte de l'expérience précieuse des dirigeants municipaux, ni des propositions que soumettent quotidiennement les chefs de service et dont doivent s'inspirer les autorités. Trop souvent, un tel plan d'ensemble sert de pâture électorale. Un candidat

peut l'appuyer ou le combattre, souvent sans savoir ce qui en est vraiment, sans connaître le pourquoi de certaines propositions. Il faudrait donc que le conseil municipal, non pas une commission indépendante, se charge des questions d'urbanisme. La fonction d'une commission indépendante consisterait à examiner ce qu'on veut faire plutôt qu'à le proposer. Voici deux moyens, selon moi, de modifier la situation actuelle. Je les exposerai le plus simplement possible.

Tout d'abord, le conseil municipal devrait instituer un comité d'urbanisme composé de quelques-uns de ses membres qui, de la sorte, connaîtraient davantage les problèmes qu'amène l'expansion de leur ville et seraient mieux en mesure de guider leurs collègues. S'ils dressaient un plan, ils se verrraient tenus de le préconiser au conseil et en public et peut-être s'en servirait-on moins à des fins politiques. Elus pour un an en maints endroits, les conseils municipaux n'ont évidemment pas le temps d'étudier suffisamment les questions d'urbanisme. Voilà, à mon avis, un motif suffisant de prolonger la durée d'office.

Une autre mesure serait d'instituer une sous-commission composée des chefs de service et qui serait tenue de présenter un vœu unanime sur les données techniques du programme proposé. Ces données peuvent être présentées à l'assentiment du conseil, ou du comité composé de ses membres qui en fera rapport au conseil. On aurait évidemment ici la fusion des deux méthodes proposées.

L'un des principaux avantages que présente la seconde

mesure, c'est que les vœux d'une sous-commission municipale d'urbanisme tiendraient davantage compte de la réalité, c'est-à-dire des ressources financières et de la compétence juridique de la municipalité.

L'urbanisme doit tenir compte des ressources financières. Si le chef du trésor municipal fait partie d'une telle sous-commission d'urbanisme, il tiendra sûrement à ce que la réalisation des projets envisagés soit en fonction des revenus et dira quelles sommes on peut affecter chaque année à cette fin.

Les commissions consultatives, formées de citoyens, auront tout de même un rôle utile: elles étudieront les projets présentés au conseil municipal, avant leur adoption définitive.

Le fruit des travaux d'urbanisme à entreprendre devrait avoir dorénavant une forte influence sur le voisinage dans lequel la plupart des Canadiens doivent continuer à vivre. Il reste beaucoup à accomplir dans l'étude des problèmes et dans la recherche et l'application d'autres modèles d'expansion. L'Association Canadienne d'Urbanisme se doit d'encourager cette recherche. Nous espérons que d'autres organismes, des particuliers aussi, se pencheront sur ces questions difficiles. Aménager des régions urbaines agréables et efficaces qui permettront à l'industrie de prendre son plein essor et aux humains d'être heureux, voilà la plus importante mise en demeure que doit envisager le Canada au cours de la seconde moitié du siècle.

*Une région d'environ 1,500 milles carrés, comprenant plus d'un demi-million d'habitants, six villes, seize municipalités rurales et quatre villages relève maintenant de la Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board de la Colombie-Britannique. Cette Commission qui a été instituée en 1949, est issue de celle qui existait antérieurement, la Lower Mainland Regional Planning Association, laquelle avait été fondée en 1937, sous la présidence de M. H-V. Jackson, président actuel de l'Association Canadienne d'Urbanisme. La division de l'ACU, en Colombie-Britannique, a collaboré étroitement au travail de la Commission. Une seconde Commission régionale d'urbanisme a été établie en décembre 1951 pour la région de Victoria.*

## REGIONAL PLANNING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

by James W. Wilson\*

THE idea of regional planning first found open expression in British Columbia about 1937, at which time there came into existence a body called the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Association, under the chairmanship of Mr. H. V. Jackson. A great deal of the credit for the ultimate emergence of regional planning as an operative function must be given to Mr. Jackson, who has throughout taken a very active part in furthering the original idea. The Association had no funds or official status and became inactive during the war.

During the war the Government of British Columbia, anticipating problems of rehabilitation in the post-war period, passed a Rehabilitation Act, as a result of which, after several stages of reorganization the Bureau of Post-War Rehabilitation and Reconstruction was established. The Bureau contained a Regional Planning Division, set up at the beginning of 1945, which in 1945 produced a Preliminary Report setting forth in some detail the resources of the Lower Mainland. This report, however, did not itself constitute a plan and no positive action took place towards the formulation of plans for action until the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board was constituted four years later. On the disbandment of the Bureau the Regional Planning Division was placed in the Department of Municipal Affairs, where it now is. It has so far concerned itself, however, with the preparation of outline plans for smaller municipalities and with the regulation of unorganized fringe areas bordering on organized urban centres.

\* James W. Wilson is a graduate in Planning from the University of North Carolina and Executive Director of the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board of British Columbia. Interest shown in the Board's first major report (described by Dr. J. W. Watson in Volume II, Number 3, p. 90) prompts this further note of amplification by the principal author of the report.

In the interim, however, the idea of regional planning was gaining ground in the Lower Mainland and a number of meetings took place at which possible forms of organization and action were discussed. At this time the objective seems to have been the establishment of a Provincial Commission, which was to have been a body with a wide representation from municipal and provincial government, labour and professional groups. In 1943 a group of municipalities petitioned the Provincial Government to undertake regional planning in the Lower Mainland. Further meetings took place in 1944 and about this time the Vancouver Town Planning Commission submitted a draft bill to the Government covering a number of recommendations, including regional planning. Also, in 1946 the consultants of the Vancouver Town Planning Commission produced a report urging the establishment of a regional planning agency and making suggestions as to its organization and financing.

In 1947, the B.C. Division of the Community Planning Association of Canada, shortly after its formation, decided to make the establishment of a Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board one of its main objectives and a series of meetings were held between representatives of the metropolitan municipalities and the Minister of Municipal Affairs. As a result, in 1948 the Town Planning Act was amended to authorize the definition of regional areas and the establishment of regional planning boards. In 1949 at the invitation of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Mr. R. C. McDonald, a meeting was held at which it was decided to petition that the Lower Mainland Region be declared a regional planning area under the new legislation. As a result the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board was created and its planning area gazetted, by proclamation of the Minister of Municipal Affairs on June 21, 1949.

Organizational meetings took place in the fall of 1949, and Mr. T. McDonald, Secretary of the B.C. Division of the Community Planning Association of Canada, was appointed secretary to the new board. The Community Planning Association played a particularly active part about this time, including financial assistance to the Board in its early stages.

Professor H. P. Oberlander of the University of British Columbia undertook the general direction of the Board's program in April, 1950, and acted as consultant to the Board until the end of 1951. By the end of 1950 a full-time staff had been engaged and a further stage of organization took place in July 1951, when a permanent executive-director was appointed.

The B.C. Division of C.P.A.C., through Professor Oberlander, was also responsible for sowing the first seeds of regional planning in the Greater Victoria area in 1951. As a result of this the Capital Region of B.C. was gazetted as a regional planning area and the establishment of its Board authorized in December, 1951. Since that time the Board has been taking shape and its program is now being formulated with the assistance of the staff of the Lower Mainland Board.

It will thus be seen that regional planning in British Columbia has followed a natural process of evolution. The movement sprang from the convictions of a few individuals of vision who imparted their enthusiasm to more and more people, and in time gained organized support. The first executive step, the acquisition of enabling legislation, was followed in the Lower Mainland by the establishment of a Planning Board which in several stages became fully staffed. The achievement of this last stage consummated many years of work involving not only a grass-roots, evangelistic program but also continuous pressure on government officials responsible for the formulation of policy. A great deal of credit for this work must go to the B.C. Division of C.P.A.C.

It is noteworthy, in passing, that in the case of bodies,

such as the regional planning boards in B.C., which are dependent on the voluntary support of a number of municipalities, energetic public relations programs must be continued beyond the point of establishment of a fully staffed board to the time, many months later, when the board's first surveys or reports are made public.

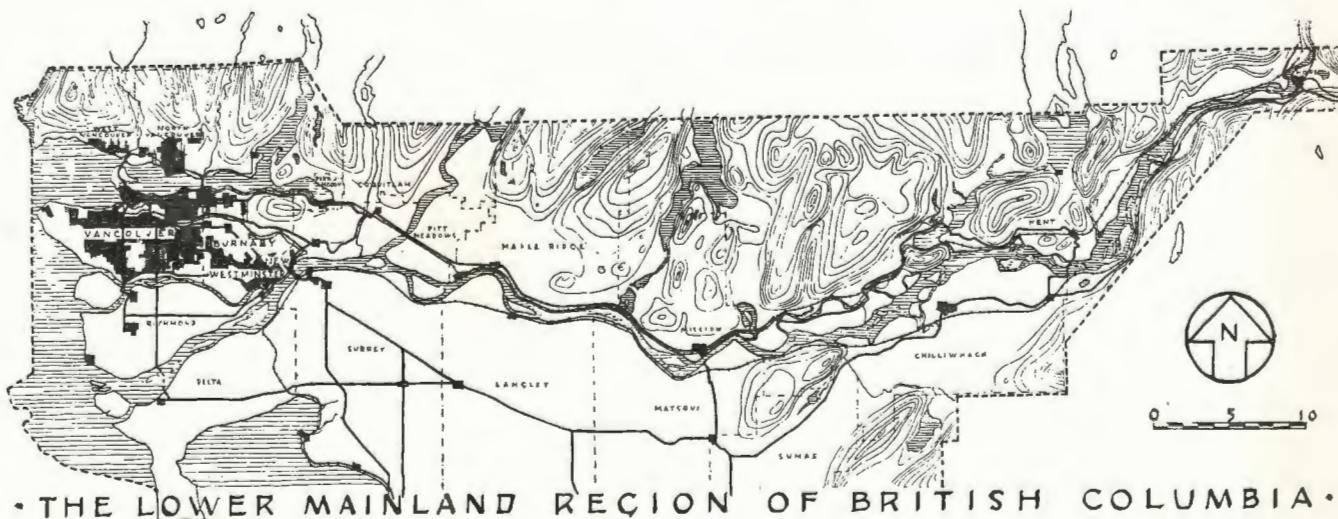
#### REGIONAL PLANNING BOARDS

As yet there are only two regional planning boards in existence in B.C., the older in the Lower Mainland Region—that is, the Lower Fraser Valley from the sea at Vancouver to the beginning of the Fraser Canyon at Hope—and the younger in the Capital Region—that is, the southern tip of Vancouver Island, including the Greater Victoria area and the Saanich peninsula. Both regions are, to a very large extent, defined by natural geographic features typical of B.C., namely mountains and the sea. While similar in that they both contain large urban centres with agricultural hinterlands, they differ greatly in scale.

The Lower Mainland Region embraces about 1500 square miles, of which about 500 are mountainous. It is thus large enough to contain the metropolis of Greater Vancouver with its 500,000 people, and independent rural cities such as Chilliwack which houses about 10,000 people, in addition to a number of rural municipalities. The Capital Region, on the other hand, at present embraces only about 100 square miles, and there is no community of appreciable size other than Greater Victoria whose population is about 100,000.

Closely related to physical size is the number of local government units involved. In the Lower Mainland there are 26, comprised of six cities, 16 district municipalities<sup>1</sup> and four villages, while in the Capital Region there are one city and four municipalities.

<sup>1</sup> The district municipality is the rural form of local organization in B.C. It is roughly equivalent to the county in Ontario.



Although both Boards operate under the same legislation, which is couched in terms<sup>2</sup> which make it possible for them to undertake planning at both the regional and the local level, it seems that their functions will be rather different in scope. The size of the Lower Mainland Region, the diversity of its territory and its population have made it possible to employ and so far maintain a full-time staff diversely equipped to deal with some of the broader, regional problems such as agriculture, the use of natural resources and administrative matters, as well as purely urban problems. On the other hand the smaller size and population of the Capital Region and the dominance of Greater Victoria make it virtually certain that the task of its Regional Planning Board will consist of predominantly metropolitan rather than regional planning in the broader sense of the term.

The Lower Mainland Board has the active support of 25 out of the 26 local governments within its area, and the Provincial Government also contributes to its support. On the present basis of financing, the Board is costing the inhabitants of the region only three cents each per year.

### REGIONAL PLANNING IN ACTION

The experience of the Lower Mainland Board has shown it to have a number of advantages as well as disadvantages. First, by being related directly to and dependent on the municipalities—which are vitally important because they have jurisdiction over land—it is very close to their problems and thus is compelled to plan realistically and practically. By the same token it is able to gain the support

of the people, harness their knowledge (for example, through special sub-committee set up to study specific problems) and also educate them in planning outlooks. Second, owing to its unbiased regional viewpoint and responsibility it is able to represent all its municipalities in negotiations with provincial and federal government departments more effectively than they could acting individually. Third, it can bring its facts, studies and analysis to bear on a wide range of individual and local as well as regional problems. In the Lower Mainland an appreciation of this store of knowledge is gradually growing and the Board's data are being used by business men, students, Boards of Trade and other promotional bodies as well as by municipalities and provincial and federal government departments. Altogether the Board is developing a large number of functional ties with many levels of development and government.

One disadvantage of the Board's position is that its regional studies often relate to provincial or federal administrative matters such as highways and airports and yet it operates outside the governmental structure and has no power to force the implementation of its plans and policies. Another is that under the present legislation it is rather precariously dependent on the voluntary support of a number of municipalities whose attitudes are not always predictable and whose appreciation of the value of planning is as yet by no means certain.

So far the Board has made a general assessment of the resources and problems of the region in its report "The Lower Mainland Looks Ahead", and is now studying some of the main regional problems in greater detail, such as major parks, airports and rural zoning. Consideration is being given, however, to directing and assisting local planning programs.

Regional planning in British Columbia has made an auspicious start. The future also is promising, and interesting developments can be anticipated as the new function develops, proves its worth and finds its best place in the structures of local and provincial government.

<sup>2</sup> "It shall be the duty of the Board to prepare a plan for the future physical development and improvement in a systematic and orderly manner of the area, based primarily upon public convenience and general welfare through the economic use of land, improved facilities for traffic, transportation, sewage-disposal, water-supply, institutions, schools, parks, recreation, and other public requirements."—Town Planning Act of B.C. Sec. 68.

*The historic Richelieu Valley of Quebec offers a fair cross-section of the problems to be met in our most rapidly urbanizing province. The valley was settled in the north in the French manner, with long narrow farms running back from the river. In the south it was settled to a different pattern by the United Empire Loyalists. Jacques Simard describes the distinct French-Canadian character of the lower valley, and decries the thoughtless commercialism, neglect and lack of foresight which can rob this region of its inherited quality. The article is based on addresses delivered by Harold Spence-Sales of McGill University and the author to a conference of the Quebec Division of CPAC at St. Johns on the Richelieu, in May 1952. The author is a member of the Association's Council and of the Quebec Division's Executive. Photographs are by Watson Balharrie of Ottawa.*

## POUR UNE LOI D'URBANISME DANS NOTRE PROVINCE

par Jacques Simard\*

**P**OUR quiconque a voyagé d'un océan à l'autre, le Canada n'est pas seulement un immense pays, un pays riche: c'est aussi une contrée d'une diversité inouie, tant dans son aspect physique que dans son mode de vie, dans les habitants qui le peuplent. Terreneuve, les Maritimes, le Québec, l'Ontario, les plaines de l'Ouest, les Rocheuses ne sont pas seulement des lieux dont la topographie diffère: ce sont autant de façons de vivre, distinctions fondamentales qui sont partie essentielle de la richesse spirituelle de la contrée.

Ayant échappé au "melting pot", les individus qui le composent ont su modeler le sol selon leurs aspirations et nulle part plus que dans le Québec peut-on voir l'empreinte de l'homme sur le sol qu'il habite.

Depuis trois siècles, un peuple s'est installé dans un pays vierge, peuple dont l'histoire n'est qu'une succession d'oeuvres grandissant l'homme; ce petit peuple rencontre devant lui un immense défi. Lentement, avec un génie qui ne se dément pas, il humanise ce pays si rude, si sauvage, si peu comparable à celui qu'il a quitté; venant des diverses provinces de France, il apporte avec lui des habitudes, des traditions qui lui sont particulières et qu'il transmettra au nouveau pays après les avoir adaptées à son usage, façonnées par le sol, par la géographie, par la végétation, par le ciel, par le climat.

Ce nouveau visage, gravé sur la nouvelle patrie plusieurs faces; et le voyageur d'aujourd'hui peut s'arrêter aux différences des régions de Gaspé, de la Beauce, du Saguenay, de l'Abitibi, des Cantons de l'est. Même le type d'homme est différent; même la langue a ses par-

\* M. Jacques Simard, homme d'affaires bien connu de Montréal, est maire de la ville suburbaine modèle de Préville. L'activité de M. Simard dans l'Association Canadienne d'Urbanisme remonte aux tous débuts; il est membre du conseil général, ainsi que de l'exécutif de Québec. L'article publié ici est la substance d'un discours prononcé au congrès de la division de Québec, à Saint-Jean, en mai 1952.

ticularités savoureuses; car le pays lui-même a changé les habitants comme les habitants ont changé le pays.

Mais quelles sont ces caractéristiques qui font que nous différons du reste du Canada? A travers les multiples régions du Québec, essayons de saisir les caractéristiques de la vallée du Richelieu, comme étant à la portée de la main et permettant dans un espace restreint, dans un microcosme de discerner la façon dont l'homme a su assouplir le sol pour ses fins et apporter ainsi une des plus riches contributions à l'héritage commun de notre pays.

Ce furent les soldats du régiment de Carignan qui colonisèrent la vallée du Richelieu. La rivière était la grande voie de communication et les fermes s'étendaient en profondeur de chaque côté. Cette forme en profondeur est d'ailleurs particulière à toute colonisation de caractère français.

Fermes au bord de l'eau, au bord de la route; terres en culture, bois debout pour se chauffer; cette façon étroite et profonde de diviser le sol se retrouve même dans la Louisiane et dans l'ouest canadien, partout où le Français s'est établi. En 1815, à la suite de la guerre américaine, on vit les "Empire Loyalists" quitter leur pays d'origine et s'établir dans la vallée du Richelieu; ils amènent avec eux leur façon de subdiviser la terre et on trouve alors des fermes qui, au lieu d'être en profondeur, sont carrées. Cette différence fondamentale de l'occupation du sol se traduit dans le système de route et dans la position de la maison d'habitation.

La diversité du sol de la vallée contribue à influencer le milieu. On s'interessera tout d'abord aux terres grasses et la culture du blé fit appeler la vallée du Richelieu "Le grenier du bas Canada", culture qui se changera en culture mixte et en pâturage après les développements de l'ouest Canadien.

D'autres parties du sols sont sablonneuses (bois de



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“... un sentiment de loyauté





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s l'oeuvre de nos ancêtres?"





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Verchères); l'humus n'est qu'en surface et la culture est quasi impossible sur de grandes étendues couvertes de sapins et d'épinettes; fait à noter, les habitants ont appris à "gosser" le bois. Ils produisent des statuettes!

D'autres sols sont aussi remarquables; ce sont les gravières qui entourent les flancs des monts isolés (Saint-Hilaire, St.-Bruno, Johnson, Rougemont) qui s'élèvent de la plaine. Cette formation du sol et sa localisation à flanc de montagne ont donné naissance à une richesse remarquable, les grands vergers de la région. Voilà à vol d'oiseau un aperçu du paysage de cette région.

Si la rivière Richelieu est l'artère principale qui ouvrit d'abord à l'homme le chemin de la terre, des routes se déployèrent bientôt qui permirent de mettre en communication les petits villages et les fermes qui s'échelonnaient le long de son cours.

Le chemin du roi! Route essentielle tracée le long du cours d'eau en relation intime avec lui, ménageant la terre, mais sachant se retirer à l'abri des crues. Les vieux chemins sont remarquables par cette sympathie du tracé entre la terre et la rivière. Ce respect des deux éléments encourage à tout moment, l'aménagement de points de vue magnifique, qui dégage au tournant, une pointe, la montagne omniprésente. Nos pères ne connaissaient pas l'inondation. Ils avaient su comprendre les crues et s'en protéger. D'une rive à l'autre, le traversier, "le bac", permettait des rapports fréquents entre les villes jumelles sans cependant leur imposer de similitude.

Dans le village, se trouve centralisée la vie culturelle et religieuse de toute la campagne environnante, ancrée profondément dans ses traditions. C'est la source même de la vitalité du peuple et cette dignité particulière n'est pas seulement le résultat du calme, de la paix, de la simplicité du cadre rural, mais bien de cette sympathie étroite qui unit l'homme à la terre dans un sentiment



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profond, dans un respect inné des choses qui ont déjà depuis longtemps démontré leur valeur.

L'habitant, qu'il soit au village ou à la ferme, a construit sa maison avec une conscience naturelle de ce que cet apport confère au paysage, au milieu. Il emploie tout naturellement les matériaux à sa main et, indépendant du chiffre et de la géométrie, il construit avec l'œil, avec la main; influencé par la courbe gracieuse du paysage, il arrondira son toit pour lui enlever la dureté de la ligne; il ne construit pas sur plan, loin de l'emplacement, mais de toute pièce sur les lieux, ajustant son travail à toute éventualité, conscient des regards des voisins avec qui il devra habiter.

Ainsi bâtissaient les grands constructeurs du moyen âge. Ce n'est pas autrement qu'on a édifié les cathédrales et c'est avec la Renaissance qu'on a commencé à perdre cette sympathie avec le cadre, le milieu, sympathie que nos pères avaient retrouvée tout naturellement.

Le hameau devient village, puis ville dans la vallée du Richelieu, comme St-Denis, par exemple, agglomération possédant déjà un cadre monumental tout en demeurant à l'échelle de l'homme.

Qu'il s'agisse de son église, de ses institutions, de ses industries, de ses parcs, de ses maisons, tout est sorti de la campagne et la vie s'y passe à un rythme à peine accru.

Mais nous direz-vous, ce que vous nous peignez là s'est du roman, ce n'est pas du tout cela! Hélas, vous avez raison.

Notre héritage a été dilapidé. Inconsciemment, nous avons perdu cet instinct, cet accord intérieur de l'homme avec le cadre, le paysage, le milieu.

Au lieu de continuer à puiser dans le sol même l'inspiration, le constructeur est allé chercher hors du milieu ses idées, a adopté des matériaux tout faits et aujourd'hui il construit à même le "magazine" ce qui est aussi bon à

Los Angeles qu'à Vancouver, qu'à St-Tite. Ca coûte cher! Est l'ordre de valeur, et non plus la qualité, la proportion, la simplicité honnête.

Le monsinge, qui ne trompe d'ailleurs personne, s'étale partout en imitations vulgaires.

La ville qui s'était lentement créé une âme se voit noyée par une marée de laideur anonyme et grossière qui monte et déborde de la masse monstreuse et inhumaine de la métropole.

Quelle responsabilité échoit à l'administration locale qui se doit d'endiguer la rapacité du commerce et des intérêts égoïstes qui, pour quelques deniers, n'hésitent pas à gaspiller notre héritage à tous; mais c'est surtout dans le village que l'absurdité de l'envahisseur apparaît. Volez par exemple par quoi on a remplacé la maison à plusieurs tenants (1); ce n'est pourtant pas l'espace qui manque, mais l'édicule reçoit le même traitement que dans la grande ville à densité inhumaine (2).

A la vue de celui qui traite le cadre de sa maison avec une visible sympathie naitra (3); dans le désordre, des bicoques moulées dans l'anonymat, la médiocrité, la mesquinerie (4). Et tandis qu'autrefois on savait s'afficher de façon à pénétrer le subconscient en flattant le goût ou l'esprit, aujourd'hui, il faut un coup de poing entre les yeux; et nous sommes rendus tellement insensibles par ces "upper-cuts" répétées qu'on ne pense même plus à détourner la tête.

Le long de la route, les anciens, qui y voyageaient lentement, s'étaient aménagé des points de vue dégagéant, encadrant agréablement le paysage (5); aujourd'hui s'allongent indéfiniment en rubans monotones des bicoques qu'inonde la rivière au printemps (6); et non seulement a-t-on ainsi bloqué toute vue sur la rivière mais on a coupé la tête des arbres pour amener les fils électriques et leurs poteaux, tandis que de l'autre côté du chemin s'ouvrent sous leurs affiches de tôle les baraques à "hot dogs".

Respecte-t-on la montagne (7), cet asile de silence où le citadin peut aller montrer à ses enfants ce qu'est la nature loin de l'asphalte et du ciment? Terre inutile, on en fait un dépotoir (8).

A toute cette incompréhension, à ce manque de délicatesse nous n'apportons pas de solution bien que plusieurs se présentent à l'esprit. Mais nous croyons que l'étude de la physionomie régionale éveillera un sentiment de loyauté envers la nature et envers l'oeuvre de nos ancêtres. De plus, la nécessité d'une loi d'urbanisme, respecteuse des caractéristiques régionales, s'imposera à quiconque ouvre les yeux.

Voilà pourquoi l'Association Canadienne d'Urbanisme réclame l'étude d'une telle loi, demande que l'Union des Municipalités (l'autorité locale) et la Chambre de Commerce de la Province de Québec (les affaires) approuvaient lors de leur dernier congrès.

Voici le texte de cette demande:

- 1—C'est le voeu de l'Association Canadienne d'Urbanisme que le gouvernement entreprenne l'établissement:
  - a) d'un dossier des caractéristiques physiques et des besoins humains de la population du territoire de la province de Québec et de ses diverses régions.
  - b) d'un inventaire des lois et règlements se rapportant directement ou indirectement à des questions d'aménagement, en vue de la préparation d'une loi d'urbanisme.
- 2—Il y a lieu de souligner qu'une loi provincial d'urbanisme devra tenir compte de façon particulière de l'organisation du contrôle régional de l'utilisation des sols, en vue de la conservation des richesses naturelles et humaines du Québec.
- 3—Le fait que la Province de Québec ne possède pas de lois d'urbanisme permet d'espérer l'adoption éventuelle d'une loi basée sur des études approfondies des caractéristiques du territoire et des besoins et aspirations de la population.
- 4—L'Association fait appel à tous les groupements, organisations, institutions intéressés à l'urbanisme pour qu'ils appuient sa campagne d'éducation sur l'urbanisme.
- 5—L'Association souligne l'importance de prévenir l'intrusion dans nos régions rurales d'aménagements qui ne tiendraient pas compte des caractéristiques et des aspirations particulières de ces régions.

*The tinsmith once  
made his sign  
himself*



*Le ferblantier savait  
s'annoncer  
lui-même*

# BRITONS TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT PLANNING

*We know the British to have been first to build large industrial cities, and hence to have encountered many pitfalls that lie ahead of us. To some extent we can avoid falling into the same errors by keeping an eye on them. After cordial wartime and post-war support for extensive re-design of their cities, a reaction has set in. Their technical press has lately contained numerous analyses of the part played by the closest friends of planning in prompting that reaction. We print short quotations from three of these analyses herewith. The first is by the City Architect and Director of Housing of Liverpool. The second is by an author who has done much to clarify the role of the designer in the industrial age. The third is by a distinguished Professor of the London School of Economics, and a frequent lecturer at the University of North Carolina.*

—*The Editor*

*A la suite de l'appui enthousiaste accordé durant la guerre et depuis en faveur d'un vaste remaniement des villes anglaises, une réaction s'est fait jour. Dernièrement, les publications techniques ont présenté de nombreuses analyses portant sur le rôle qu'ont joué les principaux tenants de l'urbanisme en vue de susciter une telle réaction. Nous reproduisons ici de brèves citations tirées de trois de ces analyses. La première est de l'architecte municipal et directeur du service de l'habitation, à Liverpool. La deuxième est due à la plume d'un écrivain qui a beaucoup élucidé le rôle de l'urbaniste dans notre âge industriel. Le troisième texte est d'un distingué professeur de l'Ecole économique de Londres, qui a souvent donné des cours à l'Université de la Caroline du Nord.*

—*La rédaction.*

## TOWN PLANNING: A MEANS NOT AN END

by Ronald Bradbury

**T**HIS town and country planning business is just a lot of fanciful nonsense. Quite frankly, I have lost faith and interest in it. How often, during recent months, has one heard expressions of this kind, or has read very similar sentiments, expressed perhaps rather more obliquely, in newspapers and periodicals! Even the Government, sensitive to this changed attitude of public opinion, first discreetly merged the Ministry of Town and Country Planning with local government under the title of 'The Ministry of Local Government and Planning', and then later finally dropped the word 'planning' altogether in favour of 'The Ministry of Housing and Local Government'; thereby bringing into prominence that aspect of planning which is the most inescapable. Surely, these changes are not just the result of whims, but are based

on a feeling for the changing views of the bulk of the population.

Somewhere in the popular press, sabotage has been cynically defined as 'throwing a planner in the works', and this idea of the destructive rather than the constructive nature of planning is, unfortunately, spreading rapidly. Despite the enthusiasm for town and country planning which was everywhere apparent, both before and immediately after the cessation of hostilities, the subject has now lost its popular appeal. Yet never at any time in the history of this nation has the need for town and country planning been so real or the problems which confront the planners more difficult.

Surely it is time that the architects and planners of this country should consider seriously whether or not this growing lack of faith in the virtues and importance of town and country planning is in any way due to their own activities and, as a corollary, whether they can do anything to stem the downhill slide. After all, there is in the British people a sound core of common-sense, and if this be the case there must surely be reasons for the waning popularity of planning.

Many town planners who, both before and immediately after the end of the war, dreamed town planning

\* From *Town and Country Planning: An End or a Means to an End*, by Ronald Bradbury, Ph.D., A.M.T.P.I., City Architect and Director of Housing, Liverpool. Reprinted from the Journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects, 3d series, Vol. 59, No. 12, October 1952.

dreams and saw town planning visions which they set down as plans or incorporated in elaborate advisory reports, appear in the main to have ignored the necessity of explaining to the public how their plans and visions might, by a series of logical steps, be realized. They have concentrated largely on the end of planning rather than the means of planning, with the result that the public appear to be writing them off as long-haired visionaries.

One way in which planners can in some degree restore public confidence in planning is to learn to talk a language which the committee member, and indeed even the ordinary man in the street, can understand. The purpose of planning is the betterment of living and working conditions for all, and it does not give much confidence to the public when what they regard as human problems, explainable in ordinary English, are translated by the experts into an obscure jargon. Mr. Smith does not like to be called 'a unit' or 'a bit of overspill'! Conurbations, green belts and gross densities become words of terror, merely on account of their obscurity. The profession must bear this important aspect in mind when framing its propaganda, whether in the form of written material or exhibitions for the public. Most architects and town planners think they possess the gift of explaining their proposals to the public. This is in fact not the case. Only experienced journalists, public relations officers, broadcasters and people of that kind really understand the art of explaining any matter to the public and convincing them of its merits. Town planning is inevitably a highly technical subject, and before the mass of voters will believe in it and support it they must be given to understand broadly and simply what it is and what it can do for them and their children. The continuous talking above their heads which is typical of so much town planning propaganda will never achieve this.

Nothing is more salutary than a examination of the dictionary meanings of the chief words in current use in planning. Take, for instance, the simple verb 'to plan'. Its meaning is defined as being 'to think out plans for, determine on, and devise methods of carrying out a project, etc.' The noun 'plan' means 'a methodical and considered arrangement of the various means and steps necessary to carry out a project'. It is essential for planners to note that in each case the meanings concern methods and steps rather than the project itself. In other words, the emphasis is on the 'means' rather than the 'ends'. To plan is not just to postulate a desired end. *It is to prepare a technique whereby that end can be achieved.*

Let us now consider the word 'project'. First, as a transitive or intransitive verb, it has several meanings. There is the general meaning of 'casting the mind forward in time, to conjure up or imagine something which has not yet happened'. Additionally, it means also 'to plan in the mind, contrive, scheme out; as, for example,

to project a plan'. The noun 'project' means merely a plan, scheme or design. The meaning of the word 'scheme' is also interesting. As a noun it means 'an orderly systematic arrangement, a proposed method or design for doing something'. It may also mean 'an underground device, design or *plot*'! Might we not say that nowadays many members of the general public interpret a planning scheme in this last-named sense?

Surely, as a generalization, it is true to say that town planners have on the whole been content to prepare planning schemes or planning projects rather than 'to prepare a plan'. When one casts one's mind back over the very ambitious proposals—many of which were, incidentally, extremely exciting—one is struck, when one reads the reports and considers the maps and drawings, by the small amount of attention given to the consideration of 'the arrangement of the various means and steps necessary to the carrying out of the project'. I remember one development plan which consisted of a volume about the size of one of the London telephone directories, with hundreds of closely printed pages, dozens of maps and innumerable statistical tables, yet in which only three pages were devoted to the problems of finance and the economics of the plan generally; and even then these fundamental matters were brushed aside in a series of generalizations.

Surely this is a case—and, unfortunately it is not an isolated one—of almost complete concentration on the ends to the almost entire exclusion of the means. The realities of contemporary society are such that economics cannot be ignored if a scheme or a project is to have the slightest chance of being implemented, either now or in the future. Broadly speaking, everyone who is concerned about planning is agreed, apart from some argument on aesthetic matters, as to the ends which are desired. A good deal less concentration on the ends and a serious attack on the means whereby these can have some hope of fulfilment is surely what is wanted if town and country planning is to mean anything—and indeed achieve anything—in contemporary society.

There is another dangerous tendency abroad, which has undoubtedly permeated the town planning sphere. That tendency is to ignore the importance of the stimulus for planning. Many people seem to imagine that the preparation of a scheme or project will of itself, somehow miraculously, create the 'stimulus, incentive or inducement' necessary to implement the scheme or project. It is the client—in this case, the public—who provides the impetus and stimulus. If there is no incentive or inducement for development and redevelopment in an area, there will be no possibility of implementing any plan. Whilst the welfare state can artificially create a certain impetus for development, unless there is also a general inducement or economic stimulus created by industry and commerce, development and redevelopment will be a very slow process indeed. This is why the

present tendency for town and country planning to become a matter of saying 'No, you cannot do that' is so terribly damaging and dangerous to the future prospects of planning.

Town and country planning cannot of itself create impetus; it can direct, however, and canalize such impetus into the right directions. The vigour, force and stimulus for development is created in numberless ways, by numberless individuals and organizations, and it must be the purpose of planning not to frustrate, dam-up or attempt to stultify any such desires to develop, but rather to encourage and assist them wherever possible; being ready to compromise in aesthetic matters wherever there is any danger of too much control regarding the development concerned. After all, the economic, cultural and social well-being of the country is entirely dependent on the rate at which development of all kinds can be proceeded with at any time, and any action which tends to diminish that development is contrary to the national well-being. Town planners are not creators of development, although many of them appear to wish to be. They are only the agents whose job it is to do their level best to ensure that the developments as they occur are appropriately arranged in an orderly and seemly manner.

This attitude of planners towards planning is the reason why the charge of arrogance can be levelled with some degree of truth at the town and country planning profession today. And it is a further reason why, with their innate common-sense, the general public have become bored with planners and planning. Any individual who considers that he alone has the God-given gift of knowing what development will take place and when, and then assumes the right to pre-determine the pattern to which that development should conform for the period of, say, the next 20 years, can surely justly be accused, certainly of arrogance and possibly of swelled-headedness.

A comparatively cursory study of the history of urban and rural development should surely disabuse the minds of planners in this matter. Even in our own lifetime, changes have taken place which none could foresee, but which have had fundamental repercussions on the ways of life of society and, therefore, on the way in which development has proceeded during that period. One has only to think of the great social changes which the motor-vehicle has created to realize this; or, again, of the impact which the cinema, the radio, and now television have had and are having upon our way of life, or the vast areas of ground which have had to be set aside to cope with the needs of air travel, to admit the impossibility of looking very far ahead into the future with the ever-developing impact of science upon peoples and nations. Nor can we discount the world-shaking effects of such apparently quite arbitrary incidents as two world wars.

Society is an ever-changing phenomenon. Planners must, in humility, realize that the future is yet to be and that it is impossible to look into the crystal ball and see with any degree of certainty what new changes not merely the distant future, but the immediate future, may bring in the way of life of our nation and hence for planning. Surely, with so many unknowables and so many unforeseeables, we should be very chary about the way in which we set about determining too rigidly the future pattern of development.

Now all this does not mean, of course, that there is no future in planning. It merely means that we must prepare as best we can, in light of all the factors and information we have at our disposal, a general skeletal scheme; and that in the preparation of such an outline scheme, we should devote great care and attention to the methods and steps by which the scheme might be implemented. Planning must be positive, but it must be flexible. A balanced judgment of a situation rather than an impassioned idealism is what is wanted.

Every scheme for development or redevelopment must be 'a proposition.' By this I mean that the pros and cons of each project must be clearly set out in any report dealing with it, so that the persons who have to make the decision whether to proceed with it or not can appreciate not only what they are doing but what the effects of their decision are likely to be. 'What will it cost? How can it be carried out? When can it be carried out? What advantages will accrue if it is carried out?' These are all very relevant questions, and the facts by means of which an answer, or at least a reasonable assessment, can be given for each of them are a pre-requisite for proper planning. Indeed, without a conscientious attempt on the part of the planner to table all the data, both for and against the project, the whole affair cannot be planning at all—it will be just a shot in the dark.

Now of course when dealing with the future, one is dealing, in a general sense, with the unknowable; and it might be argued that an insistence on the facts being available before a decision is made would preclude any action being taken at all. The answer to this charge lies in man's achievements in his evolution from primitive to contemporary society. Every sensible development is a step into the future—as, indeed, is every senseless one. But the sensible development is a step forward and not a leap in the dark. There lies the difference between what is practical and what is merely visionary. Every development is a gamble, but the odds against failure are much less if all the known factors have been carefully scrutinized before the decision to undertake development is made. A balance sheet must be struck before any planning proposal is implemented.

Of course, the balance sheet will not concern itself merely with finance; other things will appear both on the debit and credit sides. Social improvement must be paid for. The important point is that a clear all-round

gain must be shown to be reasonably achievable. After all, there is nothing new in this. Great planning achievements were bravely undertaken by our ancestors, for the carrying out of which we must always be grateful to their memory. The great docks, bridges, tunnels, roads, railways and the many great civic developments were all recognized as worth-while; the people who planned them could satisfy the people who paid for them that they were reasonable propositions; and therefore, despite the expense and difficulties, they were carried through. . . .

## PLANNING AND ORDINARY PEOPLE

by John Gloag\*

PLANNING as a word is becoming distasteful to the general public. Large sections of the popular press have made a dead set at the word, have put it on the black list, and miss few opportunities of giving it an ominous and sinister sound; while the word "planners" is almost a term of abuse. "Touch pitch and you'll be defiled", is an old proverb; and it explains the comparative readiness of ordinary people to accept shallow criticism of an activity that has been a basic art of the architect's skill since men began living in cities. Town planning has, to its detriment, been tainted with politics, and politics, as one of Kipling's characters reflected, is "a dog's game without a dog's decencies".

### TAINTED PLANNING

Planning has not been brought into disrepute by architects and town-planning specialists. Such professional men and women are technicians, too intent upon and interested in their work to inflate their ideas and ambitions with the hot wind of political propaganda; also, they are people trained to think with logical lucidity, whose artistic perceptions are brightened and disciplined by their training, and, because they are basically creative artists, they are seldom unaware or intolerant of that large wayward human audience which is sheltered and served by their work. Unfortunately, other people, without such beneficent training, have appropriated the word planning; and "economic", "social", and "political" planning have become associated with the more significant and infinitely nobler functions discharged by the architect. The copious irritations that often arise from the work of those other "planners" are a gift to political writers. Planners are now all lumped together and identified with humourless high-brows, intent on such alien activities as "social engineering", or, in plain English,

"pushing people around"; intellectuals who know what people (other people) "ought to like", who hide their always excellent intentions behind a smoke-screen of economic, psychological, and sociological jargon. And it is no good trying to laugh it off by saying that only a reactionary part of the popular press encourages this belief; because the popular press is so-called because it is popular; its circulation, running into many millions, proves that.

Thank our stars that we have a popular press: one that lives and flourishes by pleasing its public: that derives its revenue from independent advertisers, and is not in the pocket of a political party or under the thumb of a committee of fanatics. The press is popular because it is free, alert, and stimulating, but largely because it speaks to people in a language they can understand. Not in the baby-talk so often used in broadcast programs by some superior person talking down (as he or she imagines) to the audience, but in current English, spiced with slang, and leavened with familiar clichés. But, and note this all ye technicians, the popular press avoids technical jargon; and the "highbrow" planner, who doesn't, can be disposed of very easily by any skilled writer who opens his attack by saying that planners always use long, difficult, and baffling words to conceal meaning.

### TEMPTATION FOR TECHNICIANS

This is a danger which the real planners, the only men who earn that description by their education and professional life, are apt to court, particularly when they appear in print. Architects as a class are exceptionally articulate, and, apart from barristers, they can claim more able writers than any other profession. But jargon tempts them, and occasionally they fall. For example, in some correspondence that followed the publication of Mr. I. de Wolfe's proposals for "The Linear House" in the *Architect's Journal* in July last, Ruth Glass, of the Social Research Unit, Department of Town Planning, University College, London, criticized not only the proposals but the language used for presenting them. She said: "Of course, new ideas on house design are most welcome. They can hardly be of much use, however, unless they are described in plain words. There is always the danger that lay readers of architectural papers, like myself, will suspect that a hideous jargon is the language of muddled thoughts."

Mr. de Wolfe's descriptive article certainly abounded in odd words and what Shaw once called "silly clever" phrases. He wrote about "the visual hazard of the staircase" and "a degree of homescape not always available in a large country house", and told his readers that "about four feet square of free floor is needed to free the living cadaver from any real constriction of movement. . ." Indeed the tentative originality of his proposals was obscured by the prolixity of the sentences he had cobbled together. This was a pity, for his design obviously had

\* From *Planning and Ordinary People*, by John Gloag. Reprinted from *Town and Country Planning*, journal of the Town and Country Planning Association, Vol. XX, No. 103, November, 1952.

something in it, though exactly *what* would have been difficult to say after reading the author's account: but admirable illustrations by Gordon Cullen made the idea comprehensible, and of course there were plans, for the author was addressing a technical audience and not laymen. But the architect when he wants to put over ideas about house design or town planning can't always rely on the help of illustrations: he may not be allowed to use them, and when he does he may make the common mistake of assuming that members of the general public can read plans. When words alone must do his job, they should be plain words. The architect with something to say in print may not possess what H. G. Wells once called "the poetic gift, the gift of the creative and illuminating phrase which alone justifies writing", but he has the superlative advantage of having something to say about a subject he understands, and a simple statement without trimmings should suffice.

#### THE LURE OF JARGON

Now the architect and the specialist in town planning can often, in all innocence, assume some absurd disguise, so that they address the public in print as though they were writing from a psychiatrist's consulting room or an economist's study. The temptation to borrow chunks of jargon from psychology and economics has led many an architect astray; and the lure of ingenious terms is another trap for the unwary sinner, for unless a new or unusual word is really descriptive or pleasant (and "homescape" which Mr. de Wolfe used is neither), it only fogs the reader, and as legibility is the first aim of typography, so should lucidity be the first aim of writing. Architecture and town planning have too large a vocabulary of sonorous and ponderous words as it is, and some have been invented and adopted because they were descriptive though ill-sounding. What more hideous word is now in common use than "conurbation"? It suggests what the Victorians were so fond of calling "nameless orgies", but perhaps a hideous word was needed to describe a hideous disease, and one that has spread its disfigurement over the face of England. It was coined as long ago as 1912, by Sir Patrick Geddes, and has since been used as a convenience, though it is sad to think that it was conceived by one of Shakespeare's countrymen.

Conurbation is a bad word that has got into good hands. Even so, its use, like all ugly and clumsy words, does harm. Planning is a good word that has got into bad hands: it should never have been allowed out of the architect's hands, and now it is abroad in the world, attached to all kinds of enormities (as one section of the press insists) or benevolences (as another section assures you) and the public is beginning to think that it stinks, and that belief is likely to perplex and obstruct the people whose work really matters in the world today—the architects and town planners, who are slowly repairing the devastation caused by one hundred and fifty

years of blind progress. It is still not too late to begin openly to dissociate the technical operation of town and country planning from the spurious sciences, and from the various brands of political mendacity which they serve.

#### PLANNING AND POLITICS

by Professor W. A. Robson\*

I CAN well imagine how an audience of distinguished practitioners of this noble profession must shrink almost visibly at the thought of being brought into contact with anything as ignoble as politics. I apologize and I sympathize, but I insist that you must contaminate your minds with these matters of everyday life which profoundly affect the achievements which you will be able to attain. This is a particularly neglected aspect, of supreme importance to your field of work. We cannot assume that if laws are passed, that if principles are laid down, if powers are conferred upon Ministers and local planning authorities, if planning consultants and experts are appointed, and outline plans are drawn up and submitted to the Minister and all the rest of it, that in consequence planning development will automatically take place. Unless there is political force behind the whole movement it will fail for sheer lack of steam. This is one of the least understood aspects of planning.

Look at any of the great social services which occupy a major place on the political stage. Look at education, public health, social insurance and housing and see the immense political importance of these social services compared with town and country planning. You will see that the growth of these other great social services has been very largely determined by the political impetus put behind them, which has been provided by all the political parties. Town and country planning, like these other services, is supported by all the political parties, but unlike the other services, none of the parties regards town and country planning as of much political importance. No one in public life, in the Cabinet or the Government, and very few in the Civil Service, feel there are many votes to be gained or lost by planning. That applies equally to local elections and to Parliamentary elections.

This must be altered if town and country planning is to acquire a status comparable with that of those other great social services, if it is to be regarded by the political parties, by the Government of the day and by the Opposition, as something essential, as something which no Government and no local authority can afford to neglect, and in which the political parties seek to rival

\* From Town Planning as a Problem of Government by Professor W. A. Robson, PH.D., LL.M., B.Sc. (Econ.); an address given at a General Meeting on June 26th, 1952. Reprinted from the Journal of the Town Planning Institute, Vol. XXXVIII, No. 9, July-August 1952.

one another, both in actual achievement and also in the promises they make. Do not think promises made at election time do not matter. They matter a great deal.

Very closely associated with this question of making planning politically important is the question of mobilizing public opinion behind planning so as to make it politically important. That is part of the larger problem of making the planning process sufficiently democratic, sufficiently participated in by the ordinary citizens that they come to care seriously about town and country planning and feel that they are active partners in its aims and purposes. From the political standpoint planning has to confront unique difficulties in these respects because it seeks to achieve ends which the great majority of people are not easily able to apprehend since they lie outside the range of their experience.

Take a service like health. Everyone wants health, both for himself or for other people, regardless of whether he himself enjoys good health or not, and it is therefore easy to get the National Health Service across the footlights of public opinion. Take education. Everyone wants a good education for his children or himself, regardless of whether he happens to be well educated or not. Again, the field of social insurance is simple to grasp.

Everyone believes in and can understand the idea of there being some form of income maintenance or other payments to meet the vicissitudes of life or death, of retirement or sickness or unemployment or some other contingency which may arise. All these social services have purposes which are within the range of understanding of the ordinary man or woman. But when you come to town and country planning you are dealing with something whose aims are far from simple, which are not easily measured in concrete terms and which lie totally outside the experience of the vast majority of citizens. We have got to translate the great objects of planning into sufficiently simple terms to enable the ordinary voter to understand what we are driving at, and this calls for political talent of a very high order.

#### PSYCHOLOGICAL DIFFICULTIES OF THE PUBLIC

How do you make a family which has been living in an overcrowded tenement in Bermondsey, surrounded by pals which it likes and pubs which it loves, want to get to a new town situated somewhere they have never even heard of? How do you make a man who owns a small factory in Shoreditch which he has built up himself and wants to extend, accept the idea of moving to St. Albans with his factory and putting down additional capital? How is he to accept a lot of new-fangled ideas which he had never heard of until he applied for planning permission? Most people can only feel or express wants which are related to the things they have already experienced or seen, and therefore most of the aims and objects of the planner are far beyond their present comprehension. The very terms which express the concepts

of British planners and which are the everyday vocabulary of your profession—zones, low density, dispersion, diversification—are not only meaningless to the ordinary man, they are positively repellent. They are far too technical, to suspect, to evoke any feeling except the desire to go into the nearest pub and have a drink. Therefore people have got to be educated by some means to understand their latent needs and the possibility of satisfying those needs by means of this great new profession of which you are members.

Suppose then that it could be done. I could give you some idea of the kind of language, the kind of idiom and the sort of appeal which would have to be made. However, time does not permit and therefore I have to restrict what I have to say to merely insisting that planning at the present time is very much at what one might call the Third Program stage of evolution. It probably appeals to about a quarter of a million people in this country out of forty million or so and somehow it must be made into the Home Service or Light Program if it is to become politically important.

I suggest to you that the task of making it an active force cannot be done by men, no matter how gifted, working in offices and at drawing boards. The politicians must be induced to do their utmost to break down this feeling of indifference and antagonism on the part of the public. There must be a widespread and appealing educational campaign in the political arena, linked with good public relations services. All means of popular appeal must be used to get planning across the footlights of public opinion. The electors must be made to see what planning could mean to them and they must be made somehow to care whether they get a good or a bad plan or no plan at all; and by some such means failure to carry out a development plan, failure to have a development plan, must be made to mean loss of votes from the community concerned.

Some of you may be asking, 'That is all very well, but where do we come in?' You come in in a very important way, because, as I see it, it is the duty of the professional or administrative planners or other consultants to bring home to their political masters the considerations which I have been urging, in other words to make their political masters understand their role in the planning process and its significance—which they do not appreciate at the moment. They are not likely to understand it unless you can assist them to do so.

If you look at the negative side of this problem you will see that there are plenty of interests which are quite ready actively to oppose the purposes of planning in general or of any particular plan which may affect them. Shopkeepers frequently think their interests are going to be adversely affected by density provisions which will restrict overcrowding in a neighbourhood which is served by their shops. Industrialists will often oppose zoning, the residents of high-class residential

districts resent housing estates with working-class houses being built near them, farmers and country landowners resent urban encroachments or overspill, and the protagonists of outdoor amenities sometimes object to development of any kind anywhere and would like to turn the whole of Great Britain into a bird sanctuary!

#### THE SECTIONAL APPEAL

I think a great deal of this potential opposition to planning in general and to a particular plan can be prevented by proper explanation, prior negotiation with the kinds of persons I have mentioned. There are considerable advantages in segregating the different elements in the community, approaching them at a very early stage and trying to make the particular aspects of the plan which affects them acceptable to them. Consider, for example, the economic aspects of a plan. That affects man as a producer and distributor and therefore you should approach trade unions, employers' associations, Chambers of Commerce, local Trades Councils and so on. Again, the features of a plan associated with shopping centres obviously affect in the first instance all women, and therefore organizations like Women's Institutes, women's sections in the political parties, co-operative organizations and so on should be consulted. In regard to recreational facilities, including both indoor and outdoor amenities, such organizations as youth leaders, boys' clubs, Boy Scouts, the Y.M.C.A., athletic and sporting clubs would

be interested in the amenity features of a development plan and might be made to feel that this was something which they could support.

We have an immensely rich and varied group life in this country. There are thousands of voluntary associations representing every aspect of social, political, economic, religious and artistic life, and if planners are wise they will make use of that rich variety of voluntary associations. But it is not enough to consult the various interests concerned after the plan is made. That is not likely to produce the most successful results. It is desirable to get the active interest, support and perhaps even enthusiasm, of housing associations, parents' associations, Chambers of Commerce, trade unions, etc., at a much earlier stage and make the citizens who belong to these various bodies feel that they have a share in influencing and creating the plan, that it is in some measure their plan and that the fulfilment of it depends to no small extent on their drive and interest.

So I conclude that planning cannot be successful if it is confronted by a body of opinion which is sceptical, antagonistic or indifferent. It must have behind it the force of public interest and understanding and active co-operation. Only by such means as these can town and country planning transform the life of our society and of the individual members of it by making it more healthy, more beautiful, more convenient and more dignified than it is at present.

## Book Reviews

### HOUSING MARKET BEHAVIOUR IN A DECLINING AREA

by Leo Grebler\*

THIS very important book is the first in a series of studies of urban real estate markets being carried out by the Institute. Other studies in this and allied fields of concern to urban land economists and planners are under way or scheduled for future publication. The area under review is the Lower East Side of New York City, and the period covered is the fifty-year period starting in 1900. The purpose of the book is to present a study of the behaviour of the housing market in a slum area, and the factors influencing its movements.

There are several good things to be said about a book such as this one by Grebler. It may be assessed simply as a literary effort—considering the style and quality of

the writing; or as a case study—providing a set of facts pertaining to an item of interest to planners; or as a piece of professional writing. Grebler of course is a first-class economist and he writes as a professional person. It is in this role that the book is most useful.

The purpose of this review then is to draw the attention of planners and lay members of C.P.A.C. to the professionalization implied by Grebler's study. As planning moves towards professional status, there is some tendency for those interested to forget that planning is essentially a social science rather than a physical one. Grebler's first (and possibly unconscious) contribution is to treat the study of housing values in slum areas as a problem in a social science. This is an important point; because in a society characterized by the freedom of individual and corporate units to seek their maximum profit in any given situation, that type of planning is best which endeavours to guide the market forces to desired ends rather than to super-impose a pattern from above. Therefore analysis of these forces is of value not only for the understanding it imparts but also because, in this instance, it points up a method of inquiry of value to the planner. In fact the report, while lacking its directness and pungency, does for urban planning what Salter's *Land Economics* did for rural land use research. It is good to know that Grebler's study is the first in a

\* Publications of the Institute for Urban Land Use and Housing Studies, Columbia University. New York, Columbia University Press, 1952, (\$4.50). In Canada, Oxford U. Press, (\$5.75).

series being sponsored by the Institute. In addition to other studies in the field of market behaviour the Institute has under way investigations into the dynamics of land use and residential mobility. Informed analytical reports of this nature should be a welcome addition to the stock of planning literature; (this reviewer would like to see an ecological analysis of a slum area by a good sociologist).

In the introduction it is stated that the study "centres around long-term changes in the housing inventory and its use, the economic and social forces influencing these changes, and manifestations of market behaviour associated with them". Questions naturally arise as to the rate "at which low-quality housing is removed, the factors producing removal, . . . the time lag between nonutilization of standing housing and its physical removal . . .". Grebler looks into these matters; and although, as he states, a study of one area is not sufficient basis for generalization, he does arrive at some tentative conclusions. He has included chapters on utilization of the housing inventory, rental trends, real estate transfers, changes in assessed values, slum ownership, etc.

During the period under review the population of the Lower East Side dropped by over 60 percent, but the number of dwelling units decreased by only about 40 percent—indicating a strong persistency on the housing stock despite a falling and inadequate demand. Grebler's studies in regard to the demolition of slum buildings point up his suggestion that "the removal of slums through the action of market forces alone appears to be related not so much to physical or economic depreciation as to alternative uses for the land . . .". In the case of the subject area the alternatives for other land uses were poor, and because of this the slums tended to remain standing. Despite the high vacancy rate it is worth noting that occupancy did not increase during periods of low income. In other words those conditions which forced tenants out of the Lower East Side were sufficiently strong to keep the population movement outwards except during periods of actual housing shortage. This conclusion is bolstered by a study of the reasons given by a sample group of families moving from the area. The major reason was to obtain better living conditions, and in only a small percentage of cases did lower rent figure as a reason for moving. The general conclusion is reached that higher incomes and shorter working hours (which raise the standard of living) affect the housing standard in such a way that, as slum dwellers become better able to move and to increase their knowledge of alternative living conditions, they tend to leave the poorest sections—which then remain vacant. It would appear that slum dwelling is not voluntary.

In dealing with factors influencing the utilization of the housing stock, Grebler touched briefly on the effect of law enforcement. During the period he reviewed there was a strong attempt made by the municipal

authorities to improve the quality of the housing by a program of strict law enforcement, so that in looking back there was some opportunity to assess its effectiveness. The enforcement of laws governing minimum standards only partly worked to improve the quality of the housing. In some cases the buildings were boarded up or demolished by owners who either could not carry out the required improvements or did not feel it would pay them to do so. Buildings owned by corporations as investments were more readily improved, no doubt because of easier financing and the sensitivity of such owners to public opinion; but on the whole, the net effect of code enforcement was a decrease in the number of units available. It also appeared that the reaction to a law-enforcement program intended to improve sub-standard buildings would be influenced by the state of the rental market at the time.

The most interesting—and arresting—part of the book is a brief note on implications of the study. In four pages of non-technical writing Grebler analyses the implications of his findings from the point of view of urban planning. His general conclusion is that entire slum areas must be dealt with as a whole. Improvement of individual properties or even blocks would not affect the nature of the area and would to a great extent, he feels, be nullified. Neither does he feel that spotting public improvements throughout the area is sufficient. In this connection Grebler points out that high-density public housing projects in the Lower East Side of New York have added value to contiguous land areas, value mainly for derived commercial purposes. But such projects can only cover a small portion of the land. The implication is that an entire slum area must be under some public control, whereby private investment in improvements would be linked to comprehensive law enforcement and a program of public housing and improvements involving some low-density areas as well as open spaces. As suggested above, a great part of the value of this book lies in the fact that not only does Mr. Grebler draw conclusions of value to planners and people in the field of public welfare, but he documents the chain of analysis as any good social scientist would. It is a welcome change from some of the grandiose 'planning studies' arising from British and American growth in this field.

In passing of course it is necessary to admit that as a literary effort the book does leave something to be desired. Much of the main part of the study contains discussions of the statistical problems involved, discussions which might better be omitted or placed in an appendix. A book of this nature has a wide potential market, and should appeal to a great many readers who are neither interested in nor qualified to pass judgment on these matters. Such discussions can of course be glossed over by the non-technical reader without any real loss. Another characteristic (which is noticeably

missing in the above-mentioned 'note on implications') is the use of abstruse and vague phrases which tend to hide rather than reveal their meaning. This is most noticeable at the beginning of the book, and may be related to the development of the study and the clarification in Grebler's own mind of the concepts with which he was dealing. However these drawbacks are really minor—they may reduce somewhat the pleasure of the reader, but they do not affect the value of the book.

Ottawa

—FRED GOSSE

## QUEBEC, CROISSANCE D'UNE VILLE

par Clément Brown\*

LE Centre de Culture populaire de la Faculté des sciences sociales de l'université Laval a commencé, il y a quelques mois la publication d'une série de brochures portant sur des sujets d'intérêt social. La dernière de ces brochures est une brève étude de Clément Brown sur l'histoire de la ville de Québec, mais une histoire envisagée beaucoup plus d'un point de vue sociologique et économique que politique ou militaire, au contraire de ce qu'on était habitué de lire sur nos villes.

Le texte de M. Brown est la refonte d'un travail destiné à être incorporé à une vaste étude entreprise par le Centre de recherches sociales de Laval sur la ville de Québec. Les lecteurs de la *Revue canadienne d'urbanisme* (Vol. I, No 1) ont déjà eu l'occasion de lire un article de Jean-Chales Falardeau ('Essai de délimitation d'une banlieue de grande ville') faisant partie de cette *Etude générale de la ville de Québec*.

Après un court chapitre sur la géographie de Québec, Clément Brown entreprend d'en faire l'histoire à grands traits. La division de la vie de Québec en cinq chapitres est un peu le signe du point de vue de l'auteur: la période de gestation (chapitre 2) s'étend de 1608, année de la fondation de la ville, jusqu'aux environs de 1660, moment auquel les incursions des Indiens et les guerres avec l'Angleterre et plus tard avec les Etats-Unis, forcent Québec à vivre une période héroïque (chapitre 3) couvrant 130 ans de son histoire jusqu'à 1790.

Aux environs de cette date, Québec commence à devenir un grand port de mer, un grand marché de bois, une ville industrielle; jusqu'à 1860, quand décline le port de Québec, la ville vit presque exclusivement de la mer: son port est trop petit pour recevoir tous les bateaux qui veulent y accoster, ses chantiers sont trop petits pour satisfaire aux énormes commandes de navires de toutes sortes qu'ils reçoivent. La prospérité est grande. Malheureusement cette prospérité ne dure pas: trois coups sont portés, presque ensemble, à l'économie de la ville: le commerce du bois périclite à cause de la demande

\* Québec, Les Presses universitaires Laval. Collection Culture populaire, no 4. Un volume, 78 pages, 19 cm; 9 cartes, bibliographie. (\$1.00)

diminuée en Europe, la construction maritime baisse à cause de l'acier qui vient remplacer le bois. Et Québec n'a pas d'acier. Finalement, et c'est peut-être là le pire coup porté à l'économie de la ville, on creuse le fleuve jusqu'à Montréal permettant ainsi aux gros navires d'y remonter; et la vapeur ayant remplacé la voile permet de passer en sécurité le lac St-Pierre autrefois la terreur des pilotes. Et Québec s'endort dans une léthargie (chapitre 4) qui durera jusqu'au début du siècle malgré les efforts de plusieurs industriels qui luttent pour la survie économique de la Vieille ville. Le siècle nouveau amène une vie nouvelle dans la capitale de la province de Québec, un renouveau qui se continue jusqu'à nos jours avec un tempo qui va toujours en s'accélérant.

On pourrait reprocher à l'auteur de n'avoir pas assez insisté sur cette dernière période, 1900-1950, qui a vu Québec devenir une ville administrative et universitaire en même temps que son industrie manufacturière prenait une importance qu'elle n'avait jamais eue. Cette période est peut-être la plus importante dans l'histoire de la Vieille Capitale, puisque Québec, ne jouissant plus de son monopole du 19e siècle, entre résolument dans la lutte économique et essaye de présenter une figure autre que le pittoresque village que l'on montre aux touristes.

*Québec, croissance d'une ville* sera très utile à ceux qui voudront connaître le vrai visage de Québec, à ceux qui voudront essayer de saisir quelques traits de sa personnalité et à tous ceux qu'une connaissance superficielle ne satisfait pas. Les milliers de touristes, tout autant les canadiens que les étrangers, qui visitent Québec chaque année ne peuvent en connaître l'âme. Cette brochure ne les aidera peut-être pas à la connaître, mais contribuera à leur faire soupçonner ce qu'elle est et ce qui fait que Québec est Québec.

JAMES HODGSON

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## A CASE FOR NEW TOWNS

by Lord Beveridge\*

"THE great and endlessly growing cities of Britain, of America, of most other countries, are tragic illustrations of unplanned use of land and insane use of transport. The new towns represent an effort even at the eleventh hour to do something better." In these words Lord Beveridge, Chairman of the Newton Aycliffe Development Corporation, has expressed the basic reason why some 15 new towns are now being built in various parts of Britain. When completed they will have a combined population of over 600,000, who for the most part will have come from the overcrowded parts of the older cities. This is a social experiment on the grand scale and

\* *New Towns and the Case for Them* by Lord Beveridge, published for the Town and Country Planning Association by the University of London Press July 1952. 24 pp. Price 2 shillings.

one deserving of close attention by all interested in community planning. This brief pamphlet by Lord Beveridge, himself a resident in a new town, provides an excellent summary, not only of the case for new towns, but also of the problems—administrative, economic and social, that have been encountered in building them.

Strictly speaking the term 'New Town' should only be applied to a new town being created under the "New Towns Act 1946, an Act to provide for the creation of new towns by means of development corporations." Each town has its own development corporation, an agency not dis-similar to the Crown corporation as it is known in Canada. The development corporation is financed by Treasury grants and is consequently under Treasury control to some extent.

It is not under the direct control of Parliament but must obtain consents from the Ministry of Housing and Local Government for all the important things that it wishes to do. Development corporations are also subject to the same controls as private corporations. The Harlow Corporation in its report for 1949-50 described the administrative machinery regulating its activities as 'cumbrous almost past belief.' Lord Beveridge points out that this condition will only be remedied as the corporations develop a reputation for financial responsibility and skilful management. It is a basic principle of the new towns that they should pay their way, but not all expenditures can be justified on the basis of a cash return. It has proved to be difficult to establish social facilities such as community halls, churches, libraries and so forth under existing conditions.

A basic economic problem is the post-war cost of building. Lord Beveridge emphasizes that productivity of building labour in England is still substantially less than it was in 1939 and as post war houses are bigger and better than those built before the war, costs are approaching four times the 1938-39 level. In ordinary towns there is a large number of old houses available at comparatively low rents; in the new towns everything is new and all rents are high by British standards. In spite of this there are long waiting lists of people anxious to live in the new towns. There is some anxiety in the corporations as to the financial position of the new towns in the event of serious unemployment.

Industry is anxious to move to the new towns. All have carefully planned industrial sites and some development corporations are building factories to rent for smaller industrial users.

"At Hemel Hempstead inquiries as to possible sites have been received from more than 200 industrialists, new factory space of 500,000 sq. ft. is now built or building".

In a country as densely populated as England it has not been possible to build the new towns on virgin sites, and there are obvious advantages in making use of some of the facilities of an existing community, particularly

in the early stages of the project. Thus at Hemel Hempstead there was always a town of 20,000 which is now to be increased to 80,000, at Stevenage the initial population of 6,400 is now to be increased to 60,000. It is understandable that these proposals caused vigorous protests when they were first introduced. The average Englishman was not concerned with boosting the size of his home town; business men were afraid that the new central shopping areas would mean the decline of business in the older areas, and it was evident that for some time many social facilities including the 'pubs' would be swamped by the newcomers. On a recent tour of some of the new towns this reviewer formed the impression that these difficulties have been largely overcome or forgotten. In the new towns of Durham (Newton, Ayckliffe and Peterlee) the problem as Lord Beveridge says 'is to make something out of nothing or almost nothing under great economic difficulties'. Much has been accomplished.

The new towns will show what intelligent planning will do. They are built under conditions of financial stringency, and this means there is great economy in the use of land and in the provision of services, whilst maintaining reasonably high standard of open space and amenity. These towns will be more urban in character than the earlier garden cities and the monotony of English 'council' housing is being avoided by the use of many different housing types varying from semi-detached houses of considerable size to large apartment buildings. In one neighbourhood of Harlow there are nearly forty different types of housing units. Thus many interesting experiments in community planning are being carried out under carefully controlled conditions. Lord Beveridge points out the danger of placing undue emphasis on the quantity of homes being built "It is not enough to build as many houses as one can without much regard to where they are built. That was one of the worst mistakes between the two world wars. It allowed the monstrous, dangerous further growth of London from 1914 to 1939. The new towns can set an example and a standard of healthy, happy living, close to one's work and yet close to natural beauty. They can be an inspiration to all."

The present government has let it be known that it does not favour building more new towns at present. On the other hand it is proposing to use the Town Development Act 1952 to accomplish somewhat the same result. The difference is that under the New Towns Act a development corporation is responsible for planning and building the new town whereas under the more recent legislation existing towns will be expanded by the local authority aided by financial assistance from the treasury. Experience will doubtless be required to establish the proper field for each type of organization.

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